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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4810
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 8106
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 7164
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 2738
RUEHKF/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 8819
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 4720
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 3409
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHWSMRC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
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Friday, 01 February 2008, 13:41
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 000483
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EO 12958 DECL: 02/01/2018

TAGS FREL, PGOV, PK

SUBJECT: "THE BEST THING THAT COULD HAPPEN IN PAKISTAN"

REF: LAHORE 25 07 ISLAMABAD 5138

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson, for reasons 1.4 (b)(d)

1. (C) Summary. During a meeting with Ambassador January 31, Nawaz Sharif confirmed he was ready to work with the Pakistan People's Party in a possible coalition government.
2. (C) Ambassador and Polcouns met former Prime Minister and Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) leader Nawaz Sharif January 31 for an hour during which he discussed the reports about threats to Nawaz's security and said we were pleased to have briefed his staff on measures that could be taken to protect him.
3. (C) Ambassador noted the reports about threats to Nawaz's security and said we were pleased to have briefed his staff on measures that could be taken to protect him.
PML-N/PPP: "the best thing that could happen"

4. (C) In response to Ambassador's question about whether PML-N could work with the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in a possible coalition government, Nawaz Sharif said he was ready to work with the PPP.

5. (C) Nawaz expected both PPP and PML-N would do well at the polls if the elections were free and fair; he dismissed the Pakistan Muslim League-N's claim that the elections were rigged.

6. (C) Ambassador said we continued to support an independent judiciary and wanted to work with the new government on this issue. It was simply a matter of time before the judiciary would be able to take action against the military.
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Emotions High

7. (C) Despite the decreased level of campaigning due to security concerns, Nawaz and Khan both said that voter emotions were higher than they had been in previous elections.

8. (C) The best thing America has done recently, said Nawaz, was arrange to have General Kayani named as Chief of Army Staff. This appointment was a clear signal that the U.S. was pro-American.
We are Pro-American

9. (C) Nawaz and Khan both repeatedly said that the PML-N was pro-American. Nawaz recounted his decision to override his Chief of Army Staff's recommendation to appoint General Kayani as Chief of Army Staff.

10. (C) Comment: The fact that a former Prime Minister believes the U.S. could control the appointment of Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff speaks volumes about the relationship between the two countries.
PATTERSON